

Using Course Networking to Teach English Globally
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American Culture, Language and Customs is a course site created on Course Networking, (CN), an academic social learning environment. My project helps any interested CN users to better understand Western culture, the English language, and customs associated with the U.S. This project helps students of international backgrounds preparing to study in America to familiarize themselves with the culture to make their transitions smoother. The course is also available to the CN member who is interested in bettering their English skills or their understanding of what it means to be American. Methods of data collection include: innovative pedagogical techniques that highlight aspects of American culture in interactive ways using CN's course site capabilities, using a variety of media outlets to incorporate into course tasks, and intensive meetings with supervisors, potential learners, and language and culture educators in which prospective topics and activities are considered. I am constantly learning from this ongoing project, however, I've learned how a site like this would have greatly helped students assimilate to life here in the states. International students also commented that it would have made them feel more welcome and more aware of American customs that can't ever be "taught," but rather, experienced, through immersion. Concrete results have yet to be determined, as this course site is fairly new, however, marketing initiatives are being set forth on campus to promote its existence on CN. I anticipate on continuing the project as an intern at the CyberLab, and hope to see its benefits prove worthwhile within the international student community at IUPUI and around the world. As an English major, Spanish minor, Arabic speaker, and future educator, language and international relations are very important to me, and I strongly believe this project will reflect the Liberal Arts, School of Education, and OIA in a model way.

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